

REMARKS

Claims 1 – 4 and 8 are pending in the present application. Claims 1 – 4, 7 and 8 were rejected and/or objected to. Claim 7 has been cancelled in this response. Claims 5 – 7 and 9 - 14 have been cancelled

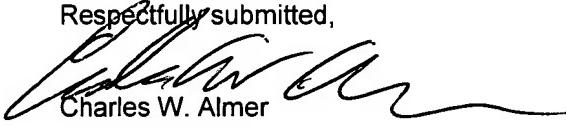
The Examiner noted that Form PTO-1449 is missing from the file. Filed herewith is a form PRO-1449 listing the references in the Information Disclosure Statement of February 3, 2003.

Claims 1 – 4 and 8 were rejected as anticipated under 35 U.S.C. 102 by U.S. Patent No. 5,681,877 issued to Hosotte-Filbert. Hosotte-Filbert discloses block copolymers used for wetting or dispersing agents for solid particles. Claim 1 of the present application has been amended to require that the block copolymers be tapered. There is no disclosure in Hosotte-Filbert of tapered block copolymers. As anticipated under 35 U.S.C. 102 requires identity of invention, in view of the differences between Hosotte-Filbert and the present invention it is respectfully submitted that claims 1 – 4 and 8 are patentable under 35 U.S.C. 102.

Claim 7 was rejected as unpatentable under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) over Hosotte-Filbert in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,098,959, issued to McGrath. Claim 7 has been cancelled.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is in condition for allowance. If there are any issues that the Examiner wishes to discuss, she is invited to contact the undersigned attorney at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



Charles W. Almer
Reg. No.36,731
Tel. No. 908 707-3738

National Starch and Chemical Company
10 Finderne Avenue
Bridgewater, NJ 08807
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